



JOHN ENGLER, Governor

**DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY***"Better Service for a Better Environment"*

HOLLISTER BUILDING, PO BOX 30473, LANSING MI 48909-7973

INTERNET: [www.deq.state.mi.us](http://www.deq.state.mi.us)

RUSSELL J. HARDING, Director

REPLY TO:

SURFACE WATER QUALITY DIVISION  
KNAPPS CENTRE  
PO BOX 30273  
LANSING MI 48909-7773

220

May 24, 2000

United States Department of Agriculture-Forest Service  
Content Analysis Enterprise Team, Attn: UFP  
Building 2, Suite 295  
Amelia Earhart Drive  
Salt Lake City, Utah 84116

Content Analysis Enterprise Team:

The Michigan Department of Environmental Quality (MDEQ), Surface Water Quality Division (SWQD), has reviewed the proposed Unified Federal Policy for Ensuring a Watershed Approach to Federal Land and Resource Management. We welcome the federal government's willingness to join us as an active player in watershed management in Michigan. Federally managed lands constitute approximately 15 percent of Michigan's land area and are in 36 of our major watersheds. Federal agencies have a major role to play in watershed management to restore and protect Michigan's water quality. For the partnership to be effective, the federal agencies should work with the state in developing time schedules for assessments and other activities.

We look forward to the federal agencies becoming partners with us and with local governments in the following watershed management activities, as identified in the proposed policy:

- Cooperating in conducting watershed assessments.
- Assisting in watershed restoration efforts.
- Defining priority watersheds and watersheds designated for special protection.
- Addressing nonpoint sources of pollution.
- Developing Total Maximum Daily Loads (TMDLs) in impaired watersheds.
- Improving federal agency compliance with the water quality requirements of the federal Clean Water Act.
- Assessing federal agency policies and procedures for land use that affect water quality.

The SWQD has found the active involvement of local government to be extremely important to a watershed planning process. While the proposed policy recognizes this, it is not clear if or how the federal agencies will take into account state and local

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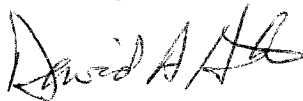
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government readiness to proceed when scheduling federal watershed assessment and planning work. For example, the federal agencies may be ready to proceed with assessment or planning before there is recognition of the need at the local level, or the agencies may be ready to proceed in a TMDL watershed that the state has scheduled for work several years in the future. The proposed policy should indicate that scheduling of watershed assessments and planning take into account state and local government priorities and readiness to proceed.

Similarly, in the event that a watershed plan already exists, either the federal watershed plan should be consistent with that plan or the federal agencies should engage the local governments into a process to update the plan.

When the federal agencies are ready to proceed with a watershed-based approach to land and resource management in Michigan, they may contact me to obtain state involvement. We look forward to sharing our experience in watershed management with federal agencies in Michigan. If you have any questions about these comments, please contact Mr. Steve Eldredge, Chief, Program Support Section, at 517-335-4177, or you may contact me.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "David A. Hamilton". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "David" being more prominent.

David A. Hamilton, Chief  
Surface Water Quality Division  
517-335-4176

dah:se:vw

cc: Mr. Arthur R. Nash Jr., Deputy Director, MDEQ  
Mr. Steve Eldredge, MDEQ  
Ms. Susan Benzie, MDEQ

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STATE OF MICHIGAN



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PO BOX 30273  
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TELECOPY COVER SHEET

PLEASE DELIVER THE FOLLOWING PAGES TO:

NAME:

FIRM:

USDA - Forest Service - Attn: WFP

PHONE NO:

FAX NUMBER:

801 - 517 - 1021

FROM:

David Hamilton

FIRM: SURFACE WATER QUALITY DIVISION

PHONE NO:

517-335-4176

FAX NUMBER:

517-373-9958

TOTAL NUMBER OF PAGES (including cover sheet): 3

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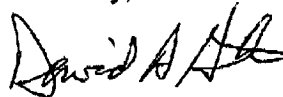
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